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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Training Program for Federal TRIO Programs

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2018 for the Training Program for Federal TRIO Programs (Training Program), Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 84.103A.

DATES:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 90 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 12,

2018 (83 FR 6003) and available at
www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-02-12/pdf/2018-02558.pdf.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Suzanne Ulmer or, if unavailable, Carmen Gordon, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, room 278-44, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 453-7700. Email: TRIO@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), contact the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The Training Program provides grants to train the staff and leadership personnel employed in, participating in, or preparing for employment in, projects funded under the Federal TRIO Programs, so as to improve the operation of these projects.

Priorities: This notice contains six absolute priorities and three invitational priorities. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv) and 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(ii), the absolute priorities are selected from section 402G(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), and the regulations for this program at 34 CFR 642.24.

Absolute Priorities: For FY 2018 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are absolute priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet these absolute priorities.

In accordance with 34 CFR 642.7, each application must clearly identify the specific absolute priority for which a grant is requested. An applicant must submit a separate application for each absolute priority it proposes to address. If an applicant submits more than one application for the same absolute priority, we will accept only the application with the latest "date/time received" validation.

These priorities are:

Absolute Priority 1. Training to improve reporting of student and project performance and the evaluation of project performance in order to design and operate a model project funded under the Federal TRIO Programs.

Estimated number of awards: 2.

Maximum award amount: \$265,764.

Absolute Priority 2. Training on budget management and the statutory and regulatory requirements for operation of projects funded under the Federal TRIO Programs.

Estimated number of awards: 2.

Maximum award amount: \$265,764.

Absolute Priority 3. Training on assessment of student needs; retention and graduation strategies; and the use of appropriate educational technology in the operation of projects funded under the Federal TRIO programs.

Estimated number of awards: 1.

Maximum award amount: \$344,945.

Absolute Priority 4. Training on assisting students in receiving adequate financial aid from programs assisted under title IV of the HEA and from other programs, on college and university admissions policies and procedures, and on proven strategies to improve the financial literacy and economic literacy of students, including topics such as basic personal finance information, household money management and financial planning skills, and basic economic decision making skills.

Estimated number of awards: 2.

Maximum award amount: \$265,764.

Absolute Priority 5. Training on strategies for recruiting and serving hard to reach populations, including students who are limited English proficient, students from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, students with disabilities,

students who are homeless children and youths (as this term is defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a)), students who are in foster care or are aging out of the foster care system, or other disconnected students.

Estimated number of awards: 1.

Maximum award amount: \$344,945.

Absolute Priority 6. Training on general project management for new project directors who have been in their positions less than two years, including training on the content of absolute priorities 1 through 5. The training should provide new directors with the basic tools required to be a successful TRIO project director.

Estimated number of awards: 2.

Maximum award amount: \$294,464.

Under this competition we are particularly interested in applications that address the following priorities.

Invitational Priorities: For FY 2018 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications for this competition, these priorities are invitational priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(1), we do not give an application that meets these invitational priorities a competitive or absolute preference over other applications.

These priorities are:

Invitational Priority 1:

Applications that propose projects designed to address one or more of the following priority areas:

(a) Implementing strategies that ensure education funds are spent in a way that increases their efficiency and cost-effectiveness, including by reducing waste or achieving better outcomes.

(b) Supporting training toward innovative strategies or research that have the potential to lead to significant and wide-reaching improvements in the delivery of educational services.

(c) Reducing compliance burden within the grantee's operations (including on partners working to achieve grant objectives or being served by the grant) in a manner that decreases paperwork or staff time spent on administrative functions, or other measurable ways that help education providers to save money, benefit more students, or improve results.

Invitational Priority 2:

Applications that propose projects designed to assist TRIO grantees with the ongoing implementation of the evidence-based strategies for which they received competitive preference in their approved applications.

Invitational Priority 3:

Applications that propose projects designed to assist TRIO grantees with improving student achievement or other educational outcomes in one or more of the following areas: science, technology, engineering, math, or computer science (as defined in the Secretary's Final Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on March 2, 2018 (83 FR 9096): specifically, supporting programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials (as defined in section 3(52) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) or skills that align with the skill needs of industries in the State or regional economy involved for careers in science, technology, engineering, and math fields, including computer science.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11 and 1070a-17.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75 (except for 75.215 through 75.221), 77, 79, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost

Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 642.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian Tribes.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to institutions of higher education (IHEs) only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 provided \$1,010,000,000 for the Federal TRIO Programs for FY 2018, of which we intend to use an estimated \$2,873,402 for Training Program awards.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2019 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$265,764-\$344,945.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$287,340.

Maximum Award and Minimum Participants: We will not make an award exceeding the maximum award amount listed here for a single budget period of 12 months. Projects proposed

under each absolute priority also must propose to serve the minimum number of applicable participants listed here.

Under Absolute Priorities 1, 2, and 4, the maximum award amount is \$265,764 and the minimum number of participants is 231. Under Absolute Priorities 3 and 5, the maximum award amount is \$344,945 and the minimum number of participants is 300. Under Absolute Priority 6, the maximum award amount is \$294,464 and the minimum number of participants is 256.

Estimated Number of Awards: 10.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 24 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: IHEs and other public and private nonprofit institutions and organizations.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

3. Subgrantees: A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Application Submission Instructions: For information on how to submit an application please refer to

our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 12, 2018 (83 FR 6003) and available at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-02-12/pdf/2018-02558.pdf.

2. Intergovernmental Review: This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this program.

3. Funding Restrictions: We specify unallowable costs in 34 CFR 642.31. We reference additional regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations and Application Review Information sections of this notice.

4. Recommended Page Limit: The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative, which includes the budget narrative and invitational priority, to no more than 55 pages and (2) use the following standards.

Note: Applications that do not follow the page limit and formatting recommendations will not be penalized.

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins.

- Double-space all text in the application narrative, and single-space titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions.

- Use a 12-point font.

- Use an easily readable font such as Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The recommended page limit does not apply to Part I, the Application for Federal Assistance face sheet (SF 424); Part II, the Budget Information Summary form (ED Form 524); Part III-A, the Program Profile form; Part III-B, the one-page Project Abstract form; or Part IV, the Assurances and Certifications. The recommended page limit also does not apply to a table of contents, which we recommend that you include in the application narrative.

5. Content and Form of Application Submission: You should indicate the absolute priority addressed in your application both on the one-page abstract and on the Training Program Profile Sheet. You must include your complete response to the selection criteria and absolute priorities in the application narrative. Other requirements concerning the content of an application,

together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this program.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this program are from 34 CFR 642.21 and are as follows:

(a) Plan of operation. (20 points)

(1) The Secretary reviews each application for information that shows the quality of the plan of operation for the project.

(2) The Secretary looks for information that shows—

(i) High quality in the design of the project;

(ii) An effective plan of management that ensures proper and efficient administration of the project;

(iii) A clear description of how the objectives of the project relate to the purpose of the program;

(iv) The way the applicant plans to use its resources and personnel to achieve each objective; and

(v) A clear description of how the applicant will provide equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have been traditionally underrepresented, such as—

(A) Members of racial or ethnic minority groups;

(B) Women;

(C) Individuals with disabilities; and

(D) The elderly.

(b) Quality of key personnel. (20 points)

(1) The Secretary reviews each application for information that shows the qualifications of the key personnel the applicant plans to use on the project.

(2) The Secretary looks for information that shows—

(i) The qualifications of the project director;

(ii) The qualifications of each of the other key personnel to be used in the project;

(iii) The time that each person referred to in paragraphs (b) (2) (i) and (ii) of this section plans to commit to the project; and

(iv) The extent to which the applicant, as part of its nondiscriminatory employment practices, encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have been traditionally underrepresented, such as—

(A) Members of racial or ethnic minority groups;

(B) Women;

(C) Individuals with disabilities; and

(D) The elderly.

(3) To determine the qualifications of a person, the Secretary considers evidence of past experience and training, in fields related to the objectives of the

project, as well as other information that the applicant provides.

(c) Budget and cost effectiveness. (10 points)

(1) The Secretary reviews each application for information that shows that the project has an adequate budget and is cost effective.

(2) The Secretary looks for information that shows—

(i) The budget for the project is adequate to support the project activities; and

(ii) Costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives of the project.

(d) Evaluation plan. (10 points)

(1) The Secretary reviews each application for information that shows the quality of the evaluation plan for the project.

(2) The Secretary looks for information that shows methods of evaluation that are appropriate for the project and, to the extent possible, are objective and produce data that are quantifiable.

(e) Adequacy of resources. (15 points)

(1) The Secretary reviews each application for information that shows that the applicant plans to devote adequate resources to the project.

(2) The Secretary looks for information that shows—

(i) The facilities that the applicant plans to use are adequate; and

(ii) The equipment and supplies that the applicant plans to use are adequate.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary also may consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

For this competition, a panel of non-Federal reviewers will review each application in accordance with the selection criteria in 34 CFR 642.21. The individual scores of the reviewers will be added and the sum divided by the

number of reviewers to determine the peer review score received in the review process. Additionally, in accordance with 34 CFR 642.22, the Secretary will award prior experience points to eligible applicants by evaluating the applicant's current performance under its expiring Training Program grant. Pursuant to 34 CFR 642.22(b)(1), prior experience points, if any, will be added to the application's averaged peer review score to determine the total score for each application.

Under section 402A(c)(3) of the HEA, the Secretary is not required to make awards under the Training Program in the order of the scores received.

In the event a tie score exists, the Secretary will select for funding the applicant that has the greatest capacity to provide training to eligible participants in all regions of the Nation in order to assure accessibility to the greatest number of prospective training participants, consistent with 34 CFR 642.20(e).

3. Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:

Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this program the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose specific conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the

applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

4. Integrity and Performance System: If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000), under 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII,

require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators, and we send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN) or an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Open Licensing Requirements: Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

4. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial

information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection analysis and reporting. In this case the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

5. Performance Measures: The success of the Training Program is measured by its cost-effectiveness based on the number of TRIO project personnel receiving training each year; the percentage of Training Program participants that, each year, evaluate the training as benefiting them in increasing their qualifications and skills in meeting the needs of disadvantaged students; and the percentage of Training Program participants that, each year, evaluate the training as benefiting them in increasing their knowledge and understanding of the Federal TRIO Programs. All grantees will be required to submit an annual performance

report documenting their success in training personnel working on TRIO-funded projects, including the average cost per trainee and the trainees' evaluations of the effectiveness of the training provided. The success of the Training Program also is assessed on the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of the training projects based on project evaluation results.

6. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation grant, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) on request to one of the program contact persons listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal Register*. You may access the official edition of the *Federal Register* and the Code of Federal Regulations via the Federal Digital System at www.gpo.gov/fdsys. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the *Federal Register*, in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the *Federal Register* by using the article search feature at www.federalregister.gov. Specifically,

through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated: June 22, 2018.

Frank T. Brogan,

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary and Delegated the duties of the Assistant Secretary, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Delegated the duties of the Assistant Secretary, Office of Postsecondary Education.

[FR Doc. 2018-13862 Filed: 6/26/2018 8:45 am; Publication Date: 6/27/2018]